

AMENDED IN SENATE FEBRUARY 12, 2002
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY FEBRUARY 4, 2002

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2001–02 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 144

Introduced by Assembly Member Wright

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~~(Coauthors: Senators Murray and Vincent)~~

(Coauthors: Senators Ackerman, Alarcon, Alpert, Battin, Bowen, Brulte, Burton, Chesbro, Costa, Dunn, Escutia, Figueroa, Haynes, Johnson, Karnette, Knight, Kuehl, Machado, Margett, McClintock, McPherson, Morrow, Murray, O'Connell, Oller, Ortiz, Peace, Polanco, Poochigian, Romero, Scott, Sher, Torlakson, Vasconcellos, and Vincent)

January 30, 2002

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 144—Relative to Black History Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 144, as amended, Wright. Black History Month.

This measure would recognize February 2002 as Black History Month, urge all citizens to join in celebrating the accomplishments of African-Americans during Black History Month, and encourage the people of California to recognize the many talents, achievements, and contributions that African-Americans make to their communities.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The history of African-Americans here in the
2 United States, as well as throughout the ages, is indeed unique and
3 vibrant, and it is appropriate to celebrate this history during the
4 month of February 2002, which has been proclaimed as Black
5 History Month; and

6 WHEREAS, The history of the United States is rich with
7 inspirational stories of great men and noble women whose actions,
8 words, and achievements have united Americans and contributed
9 to the success and prosperity of the United States; and

10 WHEREAS, Among those Americans who have enriched our
11 society are the members of the African-American
12 community—individuals who have been steadfast in their
13 commitment to promoting brotherhood, equality, and justice for
14 all; and

15 WHEREAS, From the earliest days of the United States, the
16 course of its history has been greatly influenced by Black heroes
17 and pioneers in many diverse areas, from science, medicine,
18 business, and education to government, industry, and social
19 leadership; and

20 WHEREAS, An old African proverb states, “Only when you
21 have crossed the river, can you say the crocodile has a lump on his
22 snout.” Therefore, as we move forward in the 21st Century, we
23 believe it is time we began to cross the river. The river in this case
24 will be historical contributions of Africans and
25 African-Americans to our society. Quickly, we will try to bring to
26 light historical accomplishments and facts of Africans and
27 African-Americans across the globe; and

28 WHEREAS, Scholars and scientists generally accept that
29 Africa is the continent where mankind first saw the light of day.
30 Scientists believe that man, therefore, began in Africa and
31 migrated out to populate the other continents; and



1 WHEREAS, One of the first civilizations in the history of the
2 world was Egypt, an empire that rose about six thousand years ago
3 along the Nile River. The ancient Egyptians had developed a very
4 complex religious system, called Mysteries, which was also the
5 first system of salvation. In addition, it is understood that
6 Egyptians by their study of astronomy discovered the solar year
7 and were the first to divide it into 12 parts and were the architects
8 of the great pyramids of Egypt; and

9 WHEREAS, During the first millennium, the Catholic Church
10 had three popes who were either from Africa or of African descent:
11 Saint Victor I (189–99), Saint Miltiades (311–14), and Saint
12 Gelasius I (492–96); and

13 WHEREAS, The slave trade was a tragic episode in African
14 history and began before August 1619 when the first slaves arrived
15 in Jamestown, Virginia. During the course of the slave trade, an
16 estimated 50 million African men, women, and children were lost
17 to their native continent, though only about 15 million arrived
18 safely to a new home. The others lost their lives on African soil or
19 along the Guinea coast, or finally in holds on the ships during the
20 dreaded Middle Passage across the Atlantic Ocean; and

21 WHEREAS, In spite of the African slave trade, many Africans
22 and African-Americans continued to move forward in society;
23 during the Reconstruction period, two African-Americans served
24 in the United States Senate and 14 sat in the House of
25 Representatives; and

26 WHEREAS, The first American to shed blood in the revolution
27 that freed America from British rule was Crispus Attucks (March
28 5, 1770, Boston Massacre), an African-American seaman and
29 slave. African-Americans also fought in wars including the battles
30 of Lexington and Concord in April 1775, Ticonderoga, White
31 Plains, Bennington, Brandywine, Saratoga, Savannah, Yorktown,
32 Bunker Hill, the battle of Rhode Island on August 29, 1775, and
33 other revolutionary war battles, the war of 1812, including, the
34 battle of New Orleans, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War,
35 World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam; and

36 WHEREAS, Africans and African-Americans have also been
37 great inventors, inventing such things as the air-conditioning unit,
38 almanac, automatic gear, blood plasma bag, cellular phone,
39 clothes, doorknob, doorstop, electric lamp bulb, elevator, fire
40 escape ladder, fire extinguisher, fountain pen, gas mask, golf tee,



1 guitar, horseshoe, lantern, lawnmower, lawn sprinkler, lock
2 lubricating cup, motor, refrigerator, riding saddles, spark plug,
3 stethoscope, stove, phone transmitter, thermostat control, traffic
4 light, and typewriter; and

5 WHEREAS, A number of these brave and accomplished
6 individuals, such as Booker T. Washington, George Washington
7 Carver, Matthew Hansen, Daniel Hale Williams, Dr. Charles
8 Drew, Jackie Robinson, Jesse Owens, Curt Flood, Medgar Evers,
9 and, of course, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., are noted prominently
10 in the history books of students nationwide, thus enabling them to
11 learn about the important and lasting contributions of these
12 individuals; now, therefore, be it

13 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
14 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature takes great pleasure in
15 recognizing February 2002 as Black History Month, urges all
16 citizens to join in celebrating the accomplishments of
17 African-Americans during Black History Month, and encourages
18 the people of California to recognize the many talents,
19 achievements, and contributions that African-Americans make to
20 their communities; and be it further

21 *Resolved* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
22 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

